Road bridge at Saraighat under NHDP

736. SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of Assam has represented for converting the proposed road bridge at Saraighat under National Highway Development Project (NHDP) to a rail cum road bridge; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and target set with total annual allocation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI R.P.N. SINGH) : (a) and (b) Government of Assam had sent a request in December 2006 for conversion of bridge at Saraighat from road bridge to rail cum road bridge. The work of construction of road bridge at Saraighat was already awarded in May 2006. Since the work had already been awarded, any change at that stage may have resulted in contractual difficulties and subsequent litigation and hence, it was not possible to agree to the request of Govt. of Assam.

Expansion of GT Road from Delhi-Amritsar and Delhi-Chandigarh

737. SHRI ISHWAR SINGH: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the G.T. Road from Delhi to Amritsar and Delhi to Chandigarh are under expansion;

(b) if so, the number of bridges to be constructed on these National Highways; and

(c) the number of trees on these Highways pulled down due to expansion of Highways and approximate cost thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI R.P.N. SINGH) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) 160 nos of bridges are to be constructed on these National Highways.

(c) 108965 nos of trees are to be cut. Total cost including compensation for afforestation as also Net Present Value (NPV) paid for diversion of forest land is Rs.240.507 crore.

Development of expressways in the country

738. SHRI NAND KUMAR SAI: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to kick start the stalled road programme under an ambitious network of expressways to boost connectivity across States in future;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government has prepared any draft final report for the development of expressways in the country;

(d) if so, the details thereof, State-wise; and

(e) the details of the estimated expenditure likely to be incurred under the said programme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI R.P.N. SINGH) : (a) to (e) The Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-12) *inter alia* stipulated to formulate and implement a Master Plan for 15,600 km of access-controlled expressways for high-density corridors and initiate action for determining the alignment and acquiring the land for 6,000 km and simultaneously expedite construction of 1000 km of expressways under National Highways Development Project (NHDP) Phase VI to provide unhindered, high-speed, and safe movement of traffic. The Ministry had awarded a Consultancy Services in December, 2008 for Formulation of a Master Plan for the National Expressway Network in the country giving prioritised phasing for completion of these Expressway corridors by the year 2012, 2017 and 2022. The Consultants recently submitted the Final Report based upon the views/observations received from the State Governments *inter alia* recommending total Expressway Network of about 18,637 km for completion in prioritized manner in three phases spanning upto the years 2012, 2017 and 2022. Since the Report and the detailed programme are yet to be accepted by the Government, it is premature to indicate the details of the stretches to be taken up under the programme and the expenditure likely to be incurred under the said programme.

Four laning of Jammu-Srinagar N.H.

739. SHRI G.N. RATANPURI: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any time-frame or deadline has been fixed for four laning of Jammu-Srinagar National Highway;

(b) whether Government will accord National Highway status to Mugal Road from Rajouri to Pampose; and

(c) the steps taken for construction of a tunnel across Zojila on Srinagar-Leh National Highway?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI R.P.N. SINGH) : (a) Yes, Sir. The four-laning of Jammu-Srinagar National Highway is targeted to be completed by 2015.

(b) No such proposal has been received from State Government of J&K.

(c) The design Consultant for preparation of detailed project report (DPR) has been appointed on 29.04.2009 by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) with a completion period of 18 months. The DPR consultant has started the work.

Alternative Highway for Sikkim

740. SHRI O.T. LEPCHA: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state: